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The Director of Central Intelligence

Washington, D.C. 20505

National Intelligence Council

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MEMORANDUM FOR: See Distribution

FROM: Charles E. Allen
National Intelligence Officer for Counterterrorism

SUBJECT: Warning Report for January 1988 Meeting

1. The monthly terrorism warning meeting was held on 22 January. Following is my report on the topics covered.

2. Fundamentalist Movement in the West Bank/Gaza. CIA briefed on the relationship between fundamentalist Islamic Jihad groups in the West Bank/Gaza and Fatah, the extent of external direction to Islamic Jihad activities in the Occupied Territories, and the potential for growth of fundamentalism and terrorism among Palestinians there in the future. Islamic Jihad is not an organization, nor an offshoot of Hizballah. Instead, it is a collection of groups with a common ideology--the liberation of Palestine, and a Jihad throughout the rest of the Islamic world.

The briefer noted Palestinian protests in the Territories have been indigenous and largely spontaneous with no significant PLO orchestration. Islamic Jihad fundamentalist groups have played a limited role at best, although their role may be increasing. Along with militant students and street gangs, some fundamentalists appear to have been at the forefront of protests in the West Bank and Gaza, pushing traditional Palestinian leaders--majors, clan chiefs, and local PLO activists into the background.

Islamic Jihad: Organization and Philosophy. The Palestinian Islamic Jihad is one of several groups popularly referred to as "the Khomeinists" or "Khomeini Movement" that regard Iran as a model. It is not an organization per se, nor is it an offshoot of the Iranian-sponsored Hizballah organization in Lebanon. It is a collection of cells in the West Bank and Gaza, maintaining only limited contact among themselves and having no umbrella organization. The Israeli media report many Jihad members in Gaza come from the ranks of the Islamic Mujama', apparently having rejected that organization's nonviolent methods. All Jihad groups share a common belief in the liberation of Palestine as the first, necessary step toward a holy war uniting the rest of the Muslim world under fundamentalist rule.

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The Jihadists in Gaza feel an historical attachment with the Jihad movement in Egypt that was responsible for the assassination of President Sadat. The Gazans adopted the view of the Egyptian Jihadists that it is not necessary to create a mass fundamentalist movement prior to imposing fundamentalist rule; rather they should shock the population by seizing power in a revolution and then installing a Muslim government.

Jihad members in the West Bank have been attracted to the teachings of Shaykh Assad Tamimi, who once was active in the Hizb al-Tahrir (Islamic Liberation Party) in the West Bank before 1967 and who is now an outspoken supporter of Iran in Jordan. Tamimi had been mufti of Hebron but was deported to Jordan in 1980 for his alleged role in the murder of six Jewish settler students in Hebron--an operation which Israeli intelligence officials believe was mounted jointly by West Bank fundamentalists and Fatah.

We have little information on the size of the Jihad cells in Gaza and the West Bank. The Israelis arrested about 60 alleged Jihadists in Gaza in early November. [REDACTED]

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Fatah's Western Sector--which is responsible for West Bank and Gazan affairs--began contacts with Islamic Jihad groups to carry out attacks against Israeli targets. The contact was Basam Sultan, a Muslim fundamentalist born in Hebron. Sultan returned to Amman in 1979-80, to increase contacts between Fatah and Islamic Jihad. Sultan has some 10-15 personnel, some old associates and some new ones who move in and out of the Occupied Territories to establish contacts, working through family ties. Through this means, he recruits for special operations. Sultan's people do not appear to participate in the operations, but provide financing, weapons, explosives and training to carry them out. We believe Sultan does not order specific attacks, but aids in assisting fundamentalists' plans. Sultan acts independently of Abu Jihad and the Western Sector of Fatah. Ties are limited to the financial support Abu Jihad provides.

A disagreement last year between Sultan and Western Sector over support was reconciled. At this time, it is unclear whether Sultan is in Lebanon. Some recent reports place him in either Beirut or southern Lebanon. Nevertheless, the group continues to operate from Amman.

The Islamic Jihad appears to be responsible for several attacks in the West Bank and Gaza in 1986. Last fall, Israel broke up a cell planning a car bombing. The individuals involved had been trained in Jordan, Iraq, Syria, and Algeria.

The group's role in the recent unrest in the Occupied Territories is limited but may be growing. The fundamentalists are at the forefront of the protests, especially in Gaza. But most protests are not organized--in recent days there has been some attempt to coordinate the anti-Israeli activities. The Islamic Mujama', a movement of fundamentalist members of the intelligentsia, which is prospering in the universities and which identifies with the conservative Muslim Brotherhood, has been active in urging Gazans to support a general strike. The spiritual guide of the Mujama' is Shaykh Ahmad Yasin.

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While the unrest seems to be dying down, the future is uncertain. The Israelis believe the PLO and the Islamic fundamentalists have joined together to coordinate their activities. They point up the call inter alia for a general strike. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] indicates Sheik Akmed Ali, a key figure in the Jihad, was arrested for inciting demonstrations. [REDACTED] in the Deheisheh refugee camp near Bethlehem, the Islamic Jihad, and the Muslim Brotherhood have joined in a group called the "Islamic Resistance Movement of Palestine". In Deheisheh, the group is working with local PFLP activists to stockpile food for distribution during curfews and to assist workers idled by strikes. The funding for these activities reportedly all comes from local camp residents.

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